



A TRUE

CHARACTER of Mr. POPE.

The SECOND EDITION.

S I R,



Have read over the *Libel*, which I received from you the Day before Yesterday. Yesterday I received the same from another Hand, with this Character of the Secret Author of so much stupid Calumny.

That he is one, whom God and Nature have mark'd for want of Common Honesty, and his own Contemprible Rhimes for want of Common Sense, that those Rhimes have found great Success with the Rabble, which is a Word almost as comprehensive as Mankind; but that the Town, which supports him, will do by him, as the Dolphin did by the Shipwreck'd *Monkey*, drop him as soon as it finds him out to be a Beast, whom it fondly now mistakes for a Human Creature. 'Tis, says he, a very little, but very comprehensive Creature, in whom all Contradictions meet, and all Contrarieties are reconcil'd; when at one and the same time, like the Ancient *Centaur*, he is a Beast and a Man, a Whig and a Tory, a virulent *Papist*, and yet forsooth, a Pillar of the Church of England, a Writer at one and the same time, of GUARDIANS and of EXAMINERS, an assertor of Liberty and of the Dispensing Power of Kings; a Rhimester without Judgment or Reason, and a Critick without Common Sense; a Jesuitical

cal Professor of Truth, a base and foul Pretender to Candour; a Barbarous Wretch, who is perpetually boasting of Humanity and Good Nature, a lurking way-laying Coward, and a Stabber in the Dark; who is always pretending to Magnanimity, and to sum up all Villains in one, a Traytor-Friend, one who has betrayed all Mankind, and seems to have taken his great Rule of Life from the following Lines of *Hudibras*.

*For 'tis easier to Betray
Than Ruin any other way,
As the Earth is soonest undermin'd,
By vermin Impotent and Blind.*

He is a Professor of the worst Religion, which he laughs at, and yet has most inviolably observ'd the most execrable *Maxim* in it, *That no Faith is to be kept with Hereticks*. A Wretch, whose true Religion is his Interest, and yet so stupidly blind to that Interest, that he often meets her, without knowing her, and very grossly Affronts her. His Villainy is but the natural Effect of his want of Understanding, as the soweriness of Vinegar proceeds from its want of Spirit; and yet, says my Friend, notwithstanding that Shape and that Mind of his, some Men of good Understanding, value him for his Rhimes, as they would be fond of an *Asseinego*, that could sing his part in a Catch, or of a *Baboon* that could whistle *Walsingham*. The grosser part of his gentle Readers believe the Beast to be more than Man; as Ancient Rusticks took his Ancestors for those Demy-Gods they call *Fauns* and *Satyrs*.

This was the Character, which my Friend gave of the Author of this miserable Libel, which immediately made me apprehend that it was the very same Person, who endeavour'd to expose you in a *Billingsgate* Libel, at the very time that you were doing him a Favour at his own earnest Desire, who attempted to undermine Mr. *PHILIPS* in one of his *Guardians*, at the same time that the *Crocodile* smil'd on him, embrac'd him, and called him Friend, who wrote a Prologue in praise of *CATO*, and teas'd *Lintott* to publish Remarks upon it; who at the same time, that he openly extoll'd Sir *Richard Steele* in the highest manner, secretly publish'd the Infamous Libel of Dr. *Andrew Tripe* upon him; who, as he is in Shape a *Monkey*, is so in his every Action; in his senseless Chattering, and his merry

merry Grimaces, in his doing hourly Mischief and hiding himself in the variety of his Ridiculous Postures, and his continual Shiftings, from Place to Place, from Persons to Persons; from Thing to Thing. But whenever he Scribbles, he is emphatically a *Monkey*, in his awkward servile Imitations. For in all his Productions, he has been an *Imitator*, from his Imitation of VIRGIL'S *Bucolicks*, to this present Imitation of HORACE. —His *Pastorals* were writ in Imitation of VIRGIL, —His *Rape of the Lock* of BOILEAU, —His *Essay on Criticism*, of the present Duke of Buckingham, and of my Lord Roscommon. —His *Windfor-Forest* of Sir John Denham, —His *Ode upon St. Cecilia* of Mr. Dryden, and —His *Temple of Fame*, of CHAUCER.

Thus for fifteen Years together this Ludicrous Animal has been a constant *Imitator*. Yet he has rather mimick'd these great Genius's, than he has Imitated them. He has given a False and a Ridiculous Turn to all their good and their great Qualities, and has, as far as in him lies, Burlesqu'd them without knowing it. But after having been for fifteen Years as it were an *Imitator*, he has made no Proficiency. His first Imitations, tho' bad, are rather better than the Succeeding, and this last Imitation of HORACE, the most execrable of them all.

*For as a Dog that turns the Spit,
Bestirs himself and plies his Feet
To climb the Wheel, but all in vain,
His own Weight brings him down again,
And still he's in the self same place,
Where at his setting out he was,
So in the Circle of the Arts,
Does he Advance his natural Parts.*

Hud.

If you should chance, Sir, to shew this LETTER to any of your Acquaintance who have perus'd his Senseless Calumnies, they may think perhaps that we follow his Example, and retort Slander upon him. I desire that you would have the Goodness to assure such, that in the Moral part of his Character, and all that relates to matter of Fact, there is no manner of Rhetorick us'd, all is exactly and literally true,

for

for which we appeal to those Poetical Persons, with whom we have been most conversant in *Covent-Garden*. We have always been of Opinion that he who invents, or pretends, or falsifies Matter of Fact, in order to slander any one, deserves an Infamous Punishment, and we have always had before our Eyes the following Verses out of *Horace*.

— *Absentem qui rodit amicum,
Qui non defendit alio culpante, solutos
Qui captat risus Hominum, famamque dicacis,
Fingere qui non visa potest, commissa tacere,
Qui nequit, hic niger est, hunc tu Romani.
Caveto, &c.*

As to what relates to the *Person* of this wretched Libeller, if in that there may be some trifling Exaggerations, yet even that is not design'd to Deceive or Impose upon any to whom you may happen to shew it, but is intended to lead them to an exact Knowledge of the Truth by a very little enlarging upon it.

But if any one appears to be concern'd at our upbraiding him with his Natural Deformity, which did not come by his own Fault, but seems to be the Curse of God upon him; we desire that Person to consider, that this little Monster has upbraided People with their Calamities and their Diseases which are either false or past, or which he himself gave them by administering Poison to them; we desire that Person to consider that Calamities and Diseases, if they are neither false nor past, are common to all Men; that a Man can no more help his Calamities and his Diseases, than a Monster can his Deformity; that there is no Misfortune, but what the Generality of Mankind are liable too; and that there is no one Disease, but what all the rest of Men are subject too; whereas the Deformity of this Libeller is Visible, Present, Lasting, Unalterable, and Peculiar to himself. 'Tis the [mark of God and Nature upon him, to give us warning that we should hold no Society with him, as a Creature not of our Original, nor of our Species. And they who have refus'd to take this Warning which God and Nature have given them, and have in spite of it, by a senseless Presumption, ventur'd to be familiar

miliar with him, have severely suffer'd for it, by his Perfidiousness. They tell me, he has been lately pleas'd to say, *That 'tis Doubtful if the Race of Men are the Offspring of Adam or of the Devil.* But if 'tis doubtful as to the Race of Men, 'tis certain at least, that his Original is not from *Adam*, but from the *Devil*. By his constant and malicious Lying, and by that Angel Face and Form of his, 'tis plain that he wants nothing but Horns and Tail, to be the exact Resemblance, both in Shape and Mind, of his Infernal Father. Thus, Sir, I return you Truth for Slander, and a just Satire for an Extravagant Libel, which is therefore ridiculously called an Imitation of *Horace*, you know very well, Sir, that the Difference between *Horace*, and such an Imitation of him, is almost Infinite; and I leave you to consider what Influence such an Imitation must have upon his Readers of both Kinds, both upon those who are acquainted with that Great Poet, and with those that know him not; how contemptible it must render *Horace* to the latter, and his Imitator to the former, who when they shall behold the Ghost of their old and their valued Friend, raised up before them, by this awkward Conjuror, in a Manner so ridiculously frightful, when they behold him thus miserably mangled, and reflect at once with Contempt and Horrour, upon this Barbarous Usage of him, will not be able to refrain from exclaiming in the most vehement Manner.

Qualis adest, Quantum mutatus ab illo, &c.

They must think that their old and valued Friend had a Prophetick Spirit, and seem'd to foretel the Usage, which he has lately received from this Barbarian and his Brethren, when in the fourth Ode of his Third Book he cryed,

Vitam Britannos Hospitibus feros.

But as for the other sorts of Readers, the Readers who have no knowledge of *Horace*, but from this contemptible Imitation; what must they think, Sir, of those great Men, who extol him, for the second Genius of the *Roman-Empire*, Illustrious for so many great Qualities which are to be found in him

* *The WORMS* a Satire, Stanza 4.

alone. Must they not look upon all his Admirers, as so many Learned Ideots, and upon the *Roman-Empire* it self, as a vast Nation of Fools.

You know very well, Sir, that as *Horace* had a firmness of Judgment, and a sureness and truth of Taste; he never once form'd a wrong Judgment to himself, either of the Actions of Men in general, or of the particular Worth and Merit of Authors; he had an Honour and a Rectitude of Soul, that would have oblig'd him to die a thousand times rather than to Write any thing against his Conscience.

Pejuque letbo flagitium timet.

He was capable indeed of being provok'd to expose either a Fool or a Knave, whom otherwise he might have suffer'd to have remain'd in Obscurity; but the most barbarous Usage of his most Malicious Enemy, could never urge him to slander that Enemy. From this Force and Clearness of his Understanding, and this Noble Rectitude of his Will, it has proceeded that all his Censures are like so many *Decrees*, that have been all affirm'd by Posterity, the only Supream Court of Judicature, for the Distribution of Fame and Infamy, from which Mankind can have no Appeal. That Supream, Impartial, Incorruptible Judicature, has the same Opinions of Persons and Things, and especially of Authors that he had. The same high Value for *Tibullus*, for *Pollio*, for *Varius*, for *Virgil*; and the same Contempt for *Bavius*, for *Mevius*, for *Crispinus*, for *Alpinus*, for *Fannius*, and for a Thousand more.

The same Justness and Fineness of Discernment and the same noble Rectitude of will, appear in the *French Satirist*, which make the most considerable Share of his Merit, and the most Distinguishing part of his Character, if we will believe what he says of himself, in his Admirable Epistle to *Monsieur SEIGNELEY*. You know, Sir, that what *Boileau* says there of himself is exactly true in Fact. The Persons whom he has attack'd in his Writings have been for the most part Authors and most of those Authors Poets. The Censures which he has pass'd on them have been confirm'd by all *Europe*. But at the same time that judicious Poet, has been as liberal of his Praise to his Contemporaries, who were excellent in their Kinds, as *Cornille*, *Racine*, *Moliere*, and *La Fontaine*; Nay, he was

was generous enough to defend *Racine*, and to support and strengthen him, when a Clamorous croud of miserable Authors endeavoured to oppress him, as appears by his Admirable Epistle address'd to that Tragick Poet.

You, and I, both know very well, Sir, that there has been never wanting a Floud of such Authors, neither in *England* nor *France*, who being like this Imitator, in ev'ry Respect, the reverse of *Horace*, in Honour, in Discernment, in Genius; have always combin'd to attack any thing that has appear'd above their own dull Level, while they have hug'd and admir'd each other, Authors who have thought to be too hard for their Adversaries by opposing *Billingsgate* to Reason, and Dogmatical Assertion to Moral Demonstration; and who have been Ideots enough to believe that their Noise and Impudence could alter the Nature of Things, and the Notions of Men of Sense.

Of all these Libellers, the present Imitator is the most Impudent, and the most Incurable, who has lately pester'd and plagued the World with Five or Six Scandalous Libels in Prose, that are all of them at once so stupid and so Malicious, that Men of Sense are Doubtful, if they should attribute them to the Libellers Native Idiotism or to Accidental Madnefs.

In all these Libels, the cheif Objects of his Scandal and Malice, have been Persons of distinguish'd Merit and among these he has fallen upon none so foully as his Friends and Benefactors. Among these latter, he has attack'd no one so often, or with so much ridiculous, impotent Mallice, as Sir *Richard Blackmore*; who is Estimable for a thousand good and great Qualities. And what time has he chosen to do this. Why just after that Gentelman had laid very great Obligations on him; and just after he had oblig'd the World with, so many Editions of his Excellent *Poem* upon CREATION, which *Poem* alone is worth all the *Folios*, that this Libeller will ever write and which will render its Author the Delight and Admiration of Posterity. So that 'tis hard to determine whether this Libeller is more remarkable for his Judgment or his Gratitude.

I dare venture to affirm, that there is not an Author living so little Qualified for a Censurer as himself. I know nothing for which he is so ill Qualified as he is for Judg-
ing

ing unless it be for Translating HOMER. He has neither Taste nor judgment, but is, if you will pardon a Quibble, the very necessity of *Parnassus*; for he has none of the Poetical Laws; or if he has the Letter of any, He has it without the Spirit. Whenever he pretends to Criticise, I fancy I see *Sham-well* or *Cheatly* in the Squire of *Alsatia*, cutting a Sham or Banter to abuse some Bubble. The *Preface* is full of gross Errors, and he has shewn himself in it, a Dogmatical, Ignorant Impudent Second Hand Critick. As for the *Poem*, however he may cry up HOMER for being every where a *Gracian*—*Trumpeter* in the Original, I can see no *Trumpeter* in the *Translator*, but the King of *Spain's*. But since his Friends will alledge 'tis easie to say this, I desire it may go for nothing till I have so plainly prov'd it, that the most Foolish, and the most Partial of them shall not be able to deny it.

As for what they call his *Verses*, he has, like Mr. Bayes, got a notable knack of Rhiming and Writing smooth verse, but without either Genius or Good Sense, or any tolerable Knowledge of *English*, as I believe I shall shew plainly, when I come to the rest of his Imitations. As for his Translation of HOMER, I could never borrow it till this very Day, and design to read it over to Morrow; so that shortly you may expect to hear more of it. I will only tell you beforehand, that HOMER seems to me to be untranslatable in any Modern Language. That great Poet is just in his Designs, admirable in his Characters, and for the most part exact in his Reasoning and correct in his Noble Sentiments; but these are Excellencies, which may be already seen in the Prose Translations of Him.

The Qualities which so admirably distinguish HOMER from most other Writers, and which therefore a Translator in Verse is particularly oblig'd to show, because they cannot be shown in Prose, are the Beauty of his Diction, and the various Harmony of his Versification. But 'tis as Ridiculous to pretend to make these Shine out in *English* Rhimes, as it would be to Emulate upon a *Bag-pipe*, the Solemn and Majestick Thorough Bass of an *Organ*.

But you may suddenly expect more of this, if what I have already said, happens to entertain you.

LONDON

May 7. 1717.

I am

Sir,

Your, &c.

F I N I S.

